

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A plastic fastener comprising:

(a) a flexible filament, said flexible filament having a first end and a second end, said flexible filament having a tensile strength of about 2-4 lbs;

(b) an inserting element disposed at said first end, said inserting element being dimensioned to permit its insertion through a garment and, once inserted therethrough, to be retained by said garment; and

(c) a retaining element disposed at said second end, said retaining element being dimensioned to prevent said flexible filament from being pulled completely through said garment.

2. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 1 wherein said flexible filament, said inserting element and said retaining element form a unitary structure made of polyurethane.

3. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 1 wherein said flexible filament has a tensile strength of approximately 2 lbs.

4. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 3 wherein said flexible filament has a length of approximately 3-5 mm.

5. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 4 wherein said flexible filament has a length of approximately 4.3 mm.

6. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 3 wherein said flexible filament has a diameter of approximately 0.2 mm.

7. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 3 wherein said inserting element is a first transverse bar and wherein said retaining element is a second transverse bar.

8. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 7 wherein said first transverse bar and said second transverse bar are parallel to one another.

9. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 7 wherein each of said first and second transverse bars has a length of approximately 1.8 mm.

10. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 7 wherein each of said first and second transverse bars has a width of approximately 0.5 mm.

11. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 7 wherein each of said first and second transverse bars has a height of approximately 0.5 mm.

12. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 7 wherein each of said first and second transverse bars has a flat inner surface proximate to said flexible filament and a convex outer surface distal to said flexible filament.

13. A plastic fastener comprising:

(a) a flexible filament, said flexible filament having a first end and a second end, said flexible filament having a tensile strength of about 2 lbs., a length of approximately 4.3 mm, and a diameter of approximately 0.2 mm;

(b) a first transverse bar disposed at said first end; and

(c) a second transverse bar disposed at said second end;

(d) wherein each of said first and second transverse bars has a length of approximately 1.8 mm, a width of approximately 0.5 mm and a height of approximately 0.5 mm.

14. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 13 wherein said flexible filament, said first transverse bar and said second transverse bar form a unitary structure made of polyurethane.

15. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 14 wherein said first transverse bar and said second transverse bar are parallel to one another.

16. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 15 wherein each of said first and second transverse bars has a flat inner surface proximate to said flexible filament and a convex outer surface distal to said flexible filament.

17. A plastic fastener comprising:

(a) a flexible filament, said flexible filament having a first end and a second end, said flexible filament having a length of approximately 3-5 mm;

(b) an inserting element disposed at said first end, said inserting element being dimensioned to permit its insertion through a garment and, once inserted therethrough, to be retained by said garment; and

(c) a retaining element disposed at said second end, said retaining element being dimensioned to prevent said flexible filament from being pulled completely through said garment.

5 18. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 17 wherein said inserting element is a first transverse bar and said retaining element is a second transverse bar.

19. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 17 wherein said flexible filament has a length of approximately 4.3 mm.

20. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 19 wherein said flexible filament has a diameter of approximately 0.2 mm.

10 21. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 20 wherein said inserting element is a first transverse bar and said retaining element is a second transverse bar and wherein each of said first and second transverse bars has a length of approximately 1.8 mm, a width of approximately 0.5 mm and a height of approximately 0.5 mm.

15 22. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 21 wherein each of said first and second transverse bars has a flat inner surface proximate to said flexible filament and a convex outer surface distal to said flexible filament.

23. The plastic fastener as claimed in claim 22 wherein said flexible filament has a tensile strength of approximately 2 lbs.

24. A fastener clip comprising:

20 (a) a first fastener, said first fastener comprising a flexible filament having a first enlarged end and a second enlarged end, said flexible filament having a length of approximately 3-5 mm;

(b) a second fastener, said second fastener comprising a flexible filament having a first enlarged end and a second enlarged end;

25 (c) said first fastener and said second fastener being arranged in a parallel, side-by-side, spaced relationship;

(d) a first connector post connecting said first enlarged end of said first fastener to said first enlarged end of said second fastener; and

30 (e) a second connector post connecting said second enlarged end of said second fastener to said second enlarged end of said second fastener.

25. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 24 wherein said flexible filament of said first fastener has a length of approximately 4.3 mm.

26. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 24 wherein each of said first enlarged end and said second enlarged end of said first fastener and said first enlarged end and said second enlarged end of said second fastener is a transverse bar.

27. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 26 wherein said first fastener and said second fastener are identical in shape and size.

28. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 27 wherein said first fastener, said second fastener, said first connector post and said second connector post form a unitary structure.

29. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 28 wherein said unitary structure is made of polyurethane.

30. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 28 wherein each of said first connector post and said second connector post extends transversely relative to said first and second enlarged ends, respectively.

31. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 30 wherein said first connector post is disposed at the approximate midpoints of mutually-opposing sides of said first enlarged end of said first fastener and said first enlarged end of said second fastener and wherein said second connector post is disposed at the approximate midpoints of mutually-opposing sides of said second enlarged end of said first fastener and said second enlarged end of said second fastener.

32. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 31 wherein each of said first and second connector posts tapers in transverse cross-sectional diameter as it extends from said second fastener to said first fastener.

33. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 31 wherein said first connector post is sufficiently flexible to permit said first enlarged ends of said first and second fasteners to pivot relative to one another and wherein said second connector post is sufficiently flexible to permit said second enlarged ends of said first and second fasteners to pivot relative to one another.

34. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 31 wherein said first fastener and said second fastener are interconnected only by said first connector post and said second connector post.

5 35. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 31 wherein said first fastener and said second fastener are further interconnected by a runner bar, said runner bar being severably connected to each of said first fastener and said second fastener.

36. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 31 wherein said flexible filament of each of said first fastener and said second fastener has a tensile strength of about 2 lbs.

10 37. A fastener clip comprising:

(a) a first fastener, said first fastener comprising a flexible filament having a first enlarged end and a second enlarged end, said flexible filament having a tensile strength of approximately 2-4 lbs.;

15 (b) a second fastener, said second fastener comprising a flexible filament having a first enlarged end and a second enlarged end;

(c) said first fastener and said second fastener being arranged in a parallel, side-by-side, spaced relationship;

(d) a first connector post connecting said first enlarged end of said first fastener to said first enlarged end of said second fastener; and

20 (e) a second connector post connecting said second enlarged end of said second fastener to said second enlarged end of said second fastener.

38. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 37 wherein said flexible filament of said first fastener has a length of approximately 3-5 mm.

25 39. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 37 wherein said flexible filament of said first fastener has a length of approximately 4.3 mm.

40. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 37 wherein each of said first enlarged end and said second enlarged end of said first fastener and said first enlarged end and said second enlarged end of said second fastener is a transverse bar.

41. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 40 wherein said first fastener and said second fastener are identical in shape and size.

42. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 41 wherein said first fastener, said second fastener, said first connector post and said second connector post form a unitary structure.

43. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 42 wherein said unitary structure is made of polyurethane.

44. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 41 wherein each of said first connector post and said second connector post extends transversely relative to said first and second enlarged ends, respectively.

45. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 44 wherein said first connector post is disposed at the approximate midpoints of mutually-opposing sides of said first enlarged end of said first fastener and said first enlarged end of said second fastener and wherein said second connector post is disposed at the approximate midpoints of mutually-opposing sides of said second enlarged end of said first fastener and said second enlarged end of said second fastener.

46. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 45 wherein each of said first and second connector posts tapers in transverse cross-sectional diameter as it extends from said second fastener to said first fastener.

47. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 45 wherein said first connector post is sufficiently flexible to permit said first enlarged ends of said first and second fasteners to pivot relative to one another and wherein said second connector post is sufficiently flexible to permit said second enlarged ends of said first and second fasteners to pivot relative to one another.

48. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 45 wherein said first fastener and said second fastener are interconnected only by said first connector post and said second connector post.

49. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 45 wherein said first fastener and said second fastener are further interconnected by a runner bar, said runner bar being severably connected to each of said first fastener and said second fastener.

50. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 37 wherein said flexible filament of each of said first fastener and said second fastener has a tensile strength of about 2 lbs.

51. A fastener clip comprising:

5 (a) a first fastener, said first fastener comprising a flexible filament having a first enlarged end and a second enlarged end, said flexible filament having a tensile strength of approximately 2 lbs. and a length of approximately 4.3 mm;

(b) a second fastener, said second fastener comprising a flexible filament having a first enlarged end and a second enlarged end;

10 (c) said first fastener and said second fastener being identical to one another and being arranged in a parallel, side-by-side, spaced relationship;

(d) a first connector post connecting said first enlarged end of said first fastener to said first enlarged end of said second fastener; and

15 (e) a second connector post connecting said second enlarged end of said second fastener to said second enlarged end of said second fastener.

52. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 51 wherein each of said first enlarged ends is a transverse bar and wherein each of said second enlarged ends is a transverse bar.

20 53. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 52 wherein each of said first connector post and said second connector post extends transversely relative to said first and second enlarged ends, respectively.

25 54. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 53 wherein said first connector post is disposed at the approximate midpoints of mutually-opposing sides of said first enlarged end of said first fastener and said first enlarged end of said second fastener and wherein said second connector post is disposed at the approximate midpoints of mutually-opposing sides of said second enlarged end of said first fastener and said second enlarged end of said second fastener.

30 55. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 54 wherein each of said first and second connector posts tapers in transverse cross-sectional diameter as it extends from said second fastener to said first fastener.

56. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 54 wherein said first connector post is sufficiently flexible to permit said first enlarged ends of said first and second fasteners to pivot relative to one another and wherein said second connector post is sufficiently flexible to permit said second enlarged ends of said first and second fasteners to pivot relative to one another.

57. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 54 wherein said first fastener and said second fastener are interconnected only by said first connector post and said second connector post.

58. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 54 wherein said first fastener and said second fastener are further interconnected by a runner bar, said runner bar being severably connected to each of said first fastener and said second fastener.

59. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 54 wherein said flexible filament has a diameter of approximately 0.2 mm.

60. A method of fixing an article of clothing to itself, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a plastic fastener, said plastic fastener comprising

(i) a flexible filament, said flexible filament having a first end, a second end, and a length, said length being suitable to fixedly retain the article of clothing against itself,

(ii) an inserting element disposed at said first end, said inserting element being dimensioned to enable its insertion through the article of clothing and, once inserted therethrough, to be retained by the article of clothing, and

(iii) a retaining element disposed at said second end, said retaining element being dimensioned to prevent said flexible filament from being pulled completely through the article of clothing; and

(b) inserting said inserting element of said plastic fastener into and completely through the article of clothing at at least a pair of locations therein, with said retaining element not being inserted into the article of clothing.

61. The method as claimed in claim 60 wherein said flexible filament has a tensile strength of 2-4 lbs.



62. The method as claimed in claim 61 wherein said flexible filament has a tensile strength of 2 lbs.

63. The method as claimed in claim 60 wherein said flexible filament has a length of approximately 3-5 mm.

5 64. The method as claimed in claim 63 wherein said flexible filament has a length of approximately 4.3 mm.

65. The method as claimed in claim 60 wherein the article of clothing is a dress shirt and wherein said flexible filament has a tensile strength of 2-4 lbs. and a length of approximately 3-5 mm.

10 66. The method as claimed in claim 65 wherein said flexible filament has a tensile strength of 2 lbs. and a length of approximately 4.3 mm.

67. A method of fixing an article of commerce to a support, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a plastic fastener, said plastic fastener comprising

15 (i) a flexible filament, said flexible filament having a first end, a second end and a length, said length being suitable to fixedly retain the article of commerce against the support,

(ii) an inserting element disposed at said first end, said inserting element being dimensioned to enable its insertion through the article of commerce and the support and, once inserted therethrough, to be retained thereby, and

20 (iii) a retaining element disposed at said second end, said retaining element being dimensioned to prevent said flexible filament from being pulled completely through the article of commerce and the support; and

(b) inserting said inserting element of said plastic fastener into and

25 completely through the article of commerce and the support, with said retaining element not being inserted into either the article or the support, in such a way as to fix the article of commerce to the support.

68. The method as claimed in claim 67 wherein the article of commerce is a dress shirt and wherein the support is a cardboard backing.

69. The method as claimed in claim 68 wherein said flexible filament has a tensile strength of 2-4 lbs.

70. The method as claimed in claim 69 wherein said flexible filament has a tensile strength of 2 lbs.

5        71. The method as claimed in claim 70 wherein said flexible filament has a length of approximately 3-5 mm.

72. The method as claimed in claim 71 wherein said flexible filament has a length of approximately 4.3 mm.

10       73. The method as claimed in claim 67 wherein the article of commerce is a dress shirt, wherein the support is a cardboard backing and wherein said flexible filament has a tensile strength of 2-4 lbs. and a length of approximately 3-5 mm.

74. A method of coupling an article of commerce to a support, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a plastic fastener, said plastic fastener comprising

15                (i) a flexible filament, said flexible filament having a first end, a second end, a tensile strength of approximately 2-4 lbs. and a length of approximately 3-5 mm;

20                (ii) an inserting element disposed at said first end, said inserting element being dimensioned to enable its insertion through the article of commerce and the support and, once inserted therethrough, to be retained thereby, and

                 (iii) a retaining element disposed at said second end, said retaining element being dimensioned to prevent said flexible filament from being pulled completely through the article of commerce and the support in the direction of said inserting element; and

25                (b) inserting said inserting element of said plastic fastener into and completely through the article of commerce and the support.

75. The method as claimed in claim 74 wherein the article of commerce is a dress shirt and wherein the support is a cardboard backing.

76. A fastener clip comprising:

30                (a) a first fastener, said first fastener comprising

- (i) a flexible filament having a first end and a second end,
- (ii) a first enlargement disposed at said first end, and
- (iii) a second enlargement disposed at said second end;

(b) a third enlargement; said third enlargement being severably  
5 connected to said first enlargement;

(c) a fourth enlargement, said fourth enlargement not being directly  
interconnected to said third enlargement, said fourth enlargement being severably  
connected to said second enlargement.

77. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 76 wherein each of said first and  
10 third enlargements is a transverse bar, said first and third enlargements being  
arranged in a parallel, side-by-side, spaced relationship.

78. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 77 wherein said first and third  
enlargements are interconnected by a connector post extending transversely  
therebetween.

79. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 77 wherein each of said second and  
15 fourth enlargements is a transverse bar, said second and fourth enlargements being  
arranged in a parallel, side-by-side, spaced relationship.

80. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 79 wherein said first and third  
enlargements are interconnected by a connector post extending transversely  
20 therebetween and wherein said second and fourth enlargements are interconnected  
by a connector post extending transversely therebetween.

81. The fastener clip as claimed in claim 80 wherein said fastener clip is a  
runner bar-less fastener clip.

82. A method of fixing together two elements, said method comprising the  
25 steps of:

- (a) providing a plastic fastener, said plastic fastener comprising
  - (i) a flexible filament, said flexible filament having a first end, a  
second end, a length and a tensile strength, said length being suitable to fix the two  
elements together, said tensile strength being sufficiently strong to keep the two  
30 elements fixed together during normal handling and yet sufficiently weak to enable

the two elements to be separated from one another without being damaged by said plastic fastener merely by having the two elements pulled away from each other until said flexible filament breaks,

5 (ii) an inserting element disposed at said first end, said inserting element being dimensioned to enable its insertion through the two elements and, once inserted therethrough, to be retained by the two elements, and

(iii) a retaining element disposed at said second end, said retaining element being dimensioned to prevent said flexible filament from being pulled completely through the two elements; and

10 (b) inserting said inserting element of said plastic fastener into and completely through the two elements, with said retaining element not being inserted into the two elements.

83. The method as claimed in claim 82 wherein said two elements are different portions of a single article of clothing.

15 84. The method as claimed in claim 83 wherein said article of clothing is a dress shirt.

85. The method as claimed in claim 84 wherein said length of said flexible filament is approximately 4.3 mm and wherein said tensile strength of said flexible filament is approximately 2 lbs.

20 86. The method as claimed in claim 82 wherein one of said two elements is an article of clothing and wherein the other of said two elements is a cardboard support.

87. The method as claimed in claim 86 wherein said article of clothing is a dress shirt.

25 88. The method as claimed in claim 87 wherein said length of said flexible filament is approximately 4.3 mm and wherein said tensile strength of said flexible filament is approximately 2 lbs.

89. The method as claimed in claim 87 wherein said article of clothing is an article of clothing for a doll.

90. The method as claimed in claim 89 wherein said article of clothing is a doll's dress.

91. The method as claimed in claim 87 wherein said length of said flexible filament is approximately 4.3 mm and wherein said tensile strength of said flexible  
5 filament is approximately 2 lbs.

92. The method as claimed in claim 82 wherein said two elements are two articles of clothing.

93. The method as claimed in claim 92 wherein said two elements are a pair of socks.

10 94. The method as claimed in claim 82 wherein said two elements are two sheets of paper.

95. A method of coupling together two or more sheets of paper, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a plastic fastener, said plastic fastener comprising

15 (i) a flexible filament, said flexible filament having a first end, a second end, a length and a tensile strength, said tensile strength being sufficiently strong to keep the sheets of paper coupled together during normal handling and yet sufficiently weak to enable the sheets of paper to be separated from one another without being damaged by said plastic fastener merely by pulling the sheets of paper  
20 away from each other until said flexible filament breaks,

(ii) an inserting element disposed at said first end, said inserting element being dimensioned to enable its insertion through the sheets of paper and, once inserted therethrough, to be retained by the sheets of paper, and

25 (iii) a retaining element disposed at said second end, said retaining element being dimensioned to prevent said flexible filament from being pulled completely through the sheets of paper; and

(b) inserting said inserting element of said plastic fastener into and completely through the sheets of paper, with said retaining element not being inserted into the sheets of paper.

96. A hand-held fastener dispensing tool for dispensing a fastener of the type comprising a flexible filament having an enlargement at one end thereof, said fastener dispensing tool comprising:

(a) a casing, said casing being provided with a needle opening;

5 (b) a hollow, slotted needle, said hollow, slotted needle being slidably movable back and forth between a retracted position disposed entirely within said casing and an extended position extending through said needle opening, said hollow, slotted needle being adapted to receive the enlargement of said fastener;

10 (c) an ejector rod, said ejector rod being slidably movable back and forth through said hollow, slotted needle to eject the enlargement disposed therein; and

(d) an anvil coupled to said casing and extending in front of said needle opening, said anvil being positioned so that said hollow, slotted needle, when in said extended position, does not extend therebeyond.

15 97. The hand-held fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 96 wherein said casing is gun-shaped and comprises a barrel portion and a handle portion.

98. The hand-held fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 97 wherein said handle portion is provided with a trigger opening, said fastener dispensing tool further comprising a trigger, said trigger being pivotally mounted in said casing and extending partially through said trigger opening for digital actuation thereof, said trigger being coupled to said hollow, slotted needle and also being coupled to said ejector rod.

20 99. The hand-held fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 98 further comprising an ejector rod carrier disposed in said barrel portion of said casing, said ejector rod being mounted on said ejector rod carrier, said ejector rod carrier being connected to said trigger in such a way that said ejector rod carrier is caused to slide back and forth through said barrel portion as said trigger is operated.

25 100. The hand-held fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 99 further comprising a needle carrier disposed in said barrel portion of said casing, said hollow, slotted needle being mounted on said needle carrier, said hand-held fastener

dispensing tool further comprising a linkage coupled to said needle carrier and selectively engageable with said ejector rod carrier for coupling and decoupling said needle carrier to and from said ejector rod carrier so that said needle carrier is caused to slide back and forth in said barrel portion only during a portion of the movement of said ejector rod carrier.

101. The hand-held fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 100 further comprising a lever disposed within said casing, said lever being pivotally mounted at a first end on a first pin, said first pin being fixed to said trigger, said lever being pivotally mounted at a second end on a second pin, said second pin being fixed to said ejector rod carrier.

102. The hand-held fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 100 further comprising a feed track disposed within said barrel portion of said casing, said feed track being shaped to receive, entirely within said barrel portion, a clip of fasteners, each of said fasteners comprising a flexible filament, a first enlargement at one end of the flexible filament and a second enlargement at the other end of the flexible filament.

103. The hand-held fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 102 wherein said feed track is defined in part by a feed guide disposed within said casing and in part by a rib formed on the interior of said casing.

104. The hand-held fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 96 wherein said anvil comprises a front portion and a rear portion, said rear portion being secured to said casing, said front portion being looped and extending in front of said opening in said casing.

105. The hand-held fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 104 wherein said front portion of said anvil is provided with an anvil opening, said anvil opening being aligned with said opening in said casing, said front portion of said anvil also being provided with a slotted outer surface.

106. The hand-held fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 105 wherein said anvil opening and said opening in said casing are spaced apart by a distance of approximately 0.25-0.3 inch.

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107. The hand-held fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 104 wherein said rear portion of said anvil is removably secured to said casing by a screw.

108. A fastener dispensing tool comprising:

(a) a gun-shaped casing, said gun-shaped casing comprising a handle portion and a barrel portion, said barrel portion being provided with an opening;

(b) a needle carrier, said needle carrier being slidably mounted in said barrel portion;

(c) a hollow, slotted needle, said hollow, slotted needle being coupled to said needle carrier and being insertable back and forth through said opening in said casing;

(d) an ejector rod carrier, said ejector rod carrier being slidably mounted in said barrel portion;

(e) an ejector rod, said ejector rod being coupled to said ejector rod carrier and being insertable back and forth through said hollow, slotted needle;

(f) a linking member coupled to said needle carrier and selectively engageable with said ejector rod carrier for coupling and decoupling said needle carrier to and from said ejector rod carrier so that said needle carrier is caused to slide back and forth in said barrel portion only during a portion of the movement of said ejector rod carrier; and

(g) a triggering mechanism, said triggering mechanism comprising a trigger, said trigger being pivotally mounted in said casing and extending partially through said handle portion thereof for manual actuation, said triggering mechanism further comprising a lever disposed within said casing, said lever being pivotally mounted at a first end on a first pin, said first pin being fixed to said trigger, said lever being pivotally mounted at a second end on a second pin, said second pin being fixed to said ejector rod carrier.

109. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 108 wherein said needle is removably coupled to said needle carrier by a locking pin.

110. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 109 wherein said barrel portion of said casing is provided with an opening for accessing said locking pin.



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111. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 108 further comprising an anvil, said anvil being coupled to said casing.

112. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 111 wherein said anvil is removably coupled to said casing.

5 113. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 108 wherein said fastener dispensing tool is adapted for dispensing individual fasteners from a fastener clip, the individual fasteners comprising a flexible filament having a first enlargement at a first end thereof and a second enlargement at a second end thereof, adjacent first enlargements of said fastener clip being connected by a first connector post, adjacent second enlargement of said fastener clip being connected by a second connector post, said first enlargements of said clip being dispensed through said hollow, slotted needle, said fastener dispensing tool further comprising an ejector clip coupled to said ejector rod carrier for severing the second connector post between adjacent second enlargements.

15 114. A fastener dispensing tool for dispensing individual fasteners from a fastener clip, said fastener dispensing tool comprising:

(a) a casing, said casing being provided with an opening;

(b) a hollow, slotted needle, said hollow, slotted needle being slidably movable back and forth through said opening in said casing;

20 (c) an ejector rod, said ejector rod being slidably movable back and forth through said hollow, slotted needle; and

(d) a feed guide, said feed guide being stationarily mounted in said casing behind said hollow, slotted needle, said feed guide defining a front portion of a feed track and comprising a stage at the end of said feed track off of which an individual fastener from a fastener clip is loaded into said hollow, slotted needle by said ejector rod.

25 115. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 114 wherein said feed guide further comprises a projection engageable with the filament portion of a fastener clip for use in preventing said fastener clip from moving rearwardly in said feed track.

116. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 114 wherein said feed guide is provided with a recessed portion having a slotted bore, said recessed portion being adapted to removably receive said hollow, slotted needle.

117. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 114 wherein said casing is interiorly shaped to define a rear portion of a feed track, said rear portion being aligned with said front portion of said feed track.

118. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 117 wherein said feed track is shaped to receive entirely within said casing a plurality of fasteners.

119. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 118 further comprising a door pivotally mounted on said casing, said door providing access to said feed track.

120. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 119 further comprising a wheel rotatably mounted in said door, said wheel being adapted to engage a fastener clip disposed in said feed track.

121. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 114 wherein said casing is provided with a pair of windows for use in monitoring a fastener clip disposed in said feed track.

122. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 114 further comprising a triggering mechanism mounted in said casing, a mechanism coupling said triggering mechanism to movement of said hollow, slotted needle and a mechanism coupling said triggering mechanism to movement of said ejector rod.

123. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 122 further comprising a mechanism for advancing a fastener clip through said feed track at a rate of one fastener per trigger stroke.

124. A fastener dispensing tool for dispensing individual fasteners from a fastener clip, said fastener dispensing tool comprising:

(a) a casing, said casing being provided with an opening;

(b) a hollow, slotted needle, said hollow, slotted needle being slidably movable back and forth between a retracted position and an extended position extending through said opening in said casing;

(c) an ejector rod, said ejector rod being slidably movable back and forth between a withdrawn position disposed behind said hollow, slotted needle and an advanced position extending through said hollow, slotted needle;

(d) a trigger mechanically coupled to said casing;

5 (e) first coupling means, coupling said trigger to said hollow, slotted needle, for moving said hollow, slotted needle from said retracted position to said extended position and then back to said retracted position during a trigger stroke; and

(f) second coupling means, coupling said trigger to said ejector rod, for moving said ejector rod from said withdrawn position to said advanced position and then back to said withdrawn position during a trigger stroke;

10 (g) wherein said first coupling means and said second coupling means are designed so that said ejector rod withdraws from said advanced position together with said hollow, slotted needle as said hollow, slotted needle moves from said extended position to said retracted position.

15 125. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 124 wherein said retracted position of said hollow, slotted needle is disposed entirely within said casing.

126. A fastener dispensing tool comprising:

20 (a) a casing, said casing being shaped to receive, entirely within said casing, a clip of fasteners, each of said fasteners in said clip comprising a flexible filament having a first enlarged portion at a first end thereof and a second enlarged portion at a second end thereof;

(b) exactly one hollow, slotted needle coupled to said casing, said hollow, slotted needle being adapted to receive the first enlarged portion of a fastener; and

25 (c) an ejector rod disposed within said casing and insertable into said hollow, slotted needle for ejecting from said hollow, slotted needle an enlarged portion of a fastener disposed therein.

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127. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 126 wherein said casing is shaped to receive entirely therewithin a clip of approximately one hundred twenty-five fasteners.

128. A fastener dispensing tool comprising:

5 (a) a casing, said casing being shaped to receive, entirely within said casing, a clip of fasteners, each of said fasteners in said clip comprising a flexible filament having a first enlarged portion at a first end thereof and a second enlarged portion at a second end thereof;

10 (b) a hollow, slotted needle coupled to said casing, said hollow, slotted needle being adapted to receive the first enlarged portion of a fastener;

(c) wherein said feed track terminates behind said hollow, slotted needle in a direction substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of said hollow, slotted needle; and

15 (d) an ejector rod disposed within said casing and insertable into said hollow, slotted needle for ejecting from said hollow, slotted needle an enlarged portion of a fastener disposed therein.

129. The fastener dispensing tool as claimed in claim 128 wherein said casing is shaped to receive entirely therewithin a clip of approximately one hundred twenty-five fasteners.